

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR EAID ML OREP (CODEL DIGGS)

SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS CALL ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER
SORRY COULIBALY

1. SUMMARY: CHAIRMAN DIGGS AND CONGRESSMEN SOLARZ AND WHALEN, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR AND STAFF, CALLED ON MALIAN MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT SORRY COULIBALY APRIL 12. DISCUSSION CENTERED ON MALIAN DEVELOPMENT GOALS, PROBLEMS, AND PRIORITIES. COULIBALY CONFIRMED MALIAN CONCERNS REGARDING CONTROL OF WATER RESOURCES, DESERTIFICATION, NOMADS; STRESSED NEED OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT; AND ENDED BY EMPHASIZING MALIAN DETERMINATION TO IMPROVE LOT OF ALL MALIANS. END SUMMARY.

2. COULIBALY WELCOMED DELEGATION WARMLY. CHAIRMAN SAID IT WAS NORMAL THAT THE DELEGATION'S TALKS SHOULD CONCLUDE WITH MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPMENT. AFTER EXPLAINING ROLE OF HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, CHAIRMAN TURNED TO STAFFERS CHALLENGOR AND POPOVICH FOR QUESTIONS. CHALLENGOR ASKED HOW DEEPLY COMMITTED MALI WAS TO CONTROL OF ITS WATER RESOURCES. COULIBALY SAID DROUGHT HAD SHOWN ABSOLUTE NEED TO CONTROL AND MASTER AVAILABLE WATER RESOURCES. RAINFALL DEFICITS LED MALI TO EMBARK ON AMBITIOUS SCHEMES TO DEVELOP SENEGAL AND NIGER RIVERS, IN
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ADDITION TO SMALLER PROJECTS IN THE INTERIOR TO CONSERVE RAINFALL AND DEVELOP GROUND-WATER RESOURCES. MALI'S PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES WERE AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK, AND WATER WAS ESSENTIAL TO BOTH.

3. CHALLENGOR THEN ASKED ABOUT PROBLEM OF DESERTIFICATION AND NOMADS. COULIBALY SAID DESERTIFICATION

WAS SERIOUS PROBLEM WHICH CAUSED POPULATION MIGRATION AND TOOK PRODUCTIVE LAND OUT OF USE. REFORESTATION WAS EXPENSIVE, TOOK A LONG TIME, AND DID NOT ATTRACT FOREIGN AID. MALI HAD STARTED SOME SMALL ACTIVITIES BUT IT WAS A SLOW PROCESS. REGARDING NOMADS, MALI HAD SOME SMALL PROJECTS TO PROVIDE ANIMALS AND CREDIT. IT WAS TOO EARLY TO TELL IF NOMADS WOULD SETTLE DOWN OR TAKE THE ANIMALS AND RETURN TO A NOMADIC LIFE. THEY WERE FREE TO CHOOSE.

4. POPOVICH ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY BASIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SAHELIAN COUNTRIES ON OBJECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT. COULIBALY SAID NO, THAT ALL HAD CHOSEN REGIONAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY AS GOAL, BUT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN APPLICATION. MALI HAD DECIDED ON "OPERATIONS" SYSTEM, WITH GOOD RESULTS. PROBLEMS WERE LACK OF WATER, FERTILIZER, AND INFRASTRUCTURE. HELP HERE WOULD INCREASE MALI'S ABILITY TO EXPORT. CHAD, NIGER, UPPER VOLTA, AND CAPE VERDE HAD REPORTED CEREAL DEFICITS THIS YEAR, AND MALI WAS ALREADY DELIVERING SOME GRAIN TO NIGER. PERHAPS IN THE FUTURE THERE WOULD BE SOME SPECIALIZATION IN THE VARIOUS SAHELIAN COUNTRIES. A COUNTRY LIKE NIGER, WHICH HAD URANIUM, MIGHT REGULARLY PURCHASE GRAINS IN MALI. SUCH SPECIALIZATION WOULD DEVELOP OVER TIME.

5. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ RAISED PROBLEM OF REDUCING INFANT MORTALITY AND INCREASING LEVELS OF HEALTH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND EDUCATION. COULIBALY SAID CREATION OF CILSS SHOWED DETERMINATION OF SAHELIAN CHIEFS OF STATE TO DEAL WITH DROUGHT. FIRST PRIORITY DECIDED WAS TO DEAL WITH MOST PRESSING NEED--FOOD. HUMAN RESOURCES, OF COURSE, MUST BE DEVELOPED AT SAME TIME, AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF CLUB DES AMIS DU SAHEL WAS WORKING ON PROBLEM. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ COMMENTED THAT US PUBLIC WOULD WANT TO SEE NOT ONLY AGRICULTURAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY BUT OVER-ALL IMPROVEMENT IN PEOPLE'S LIVING STANDARDS. COULIBALY SAID THAT MALIAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ALL HAD HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FACTOR--GOAL WAS A HEALTHY CITIZEN WITH HIGH LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

6. IN CLOSING, COULIBALY SAID HIS GOVERNMENT HOPED USG AND US CONGRESS WOULD RECOGNIZE IMPORTANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN MALI AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MALIAN DEVELOPMENT. EVEN IF USG COULD NOT

ASSIST DIRECTLY, MINISTER HOPED THAT WE WOULD
INTERVENE IN MALI'S BEHALF WITH INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE WORLD BANK TO ENCOURAGE
THEIR APPROVAL OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN MALI.
DEVELOPMENT IN MALI WAS A LONG AND DIFFICULT
PROCESS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE AID WAS VITAL.
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